

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
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O R 171727Z JAN 78
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4407
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO POUCH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION USNATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BEL
COMUSFORAZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 0427

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PO
SUBJECT: SA CARNEIRO WILL STAY ON -- FOR NOW

REF: (A) LISBON 0343 (DTG 131811Z JAN 78)
(B) LISBON 0373 (DTG 161611Z JAN 78)

SUMMARY: SENSING A NEW FLUIDITY IN THE OVERALL POLITICAL
SITUATION, EX OFFICIO PSD PRESIDENT SA CARNEIRO
HAS NOT RESIGNED FROM THE PARTY. HOWEVER, HIS SPLIT WITH
INTERIM PRESIDENT SOUSA FRANCO AND THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE
REMAINS--ITS RESOLUTION HAS SIMPLY BEEN POSTPONED. END SUMMARY.

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1. SA CARNEIRO SEES AN OPENING: MARIO SOARES'S PROBLEMS
WITH THE COMMUNISTS--WHICH CAME TO A HEAD LAST WEEKEND--AND
PRESIDENT EANES'S JAN 18 DEADLINE (REF B) GAVE
SA CARNEIRO AND THE PSD A CHANCE TO RESURRECT THEIR
PATENTED NEGOTIATING OFFER DURING THE JAN 14-15 COUNCIL
MEETING. THE COUNCIL ANNOUNCED PSD READINESS TO
REENTER NEGOTIATIONS IN SUPPORT OF:

-- A PS/PSD/CDS PLATFORM AGREEMENT WITH PARTY CABINET/SUB-CABINET POSITIONS BASED ON THE PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULAR VOTE WON IN THE 1976 ELECTIONS;
-- DIRECT PRESIDENTIAL INVOLVEMENT IN INTERPARTY NEGOTIATIONS (THE PSD HAS ALWAYS OBJECTED TO SOARES'S MEDIATOR ROLE); AND
-- THE EXCLUSION OF THE PCP FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS.
THE COUNCIL FURTHER CHARGED THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE AS WELL AS SA CARNEIRO AND PARLIAMENTARY GROUP LEADER BARBOSA DE MELO WITH PURSUING THE NEGOTIATIONS. ACCORDING TO PSD ACTIVIST VITOR ANTONIO, THE COUNCIL'S MOVE IS DESIGNED TO BOLSTER THE FLAGGING IMAGE OF PARTY UNITY AND DEMONSTRATE PSD WILLINGNESS TO PURSUE NEGOTIATIONS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST.

2. SA CARNEIRO'S PROPOSALS UNDER STUDY: RATHER THAN FACE THE DIVISIVE ISSUES OF SA CARNEIRO'S PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE PARTY STATUTES (REF A), THE COUNCIL VOTED TO ESTABLISH A FIVE-MAN COMMITTEE TO POLISH THE TEXT OF THE PROPOSALS FOR PRESENTATION TO THE END-OF-THE-MONTH PARTY CONGRESS. ACCORDING TO PARTY SOURCES, THE COMMITTEE COMPOSITION--INCLUDING NONE OF THE PARTY'S FIRST STRING--IS FAIRLY WELL BALANCED. TWO PRO-SA CARNEIRO, TWO PRO-SOUSA FRANCO, AND ONE "NEUTRAL."

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3. SOUSA FRANCO STILL THE TARGET: SA CARNEIRO ADDRESSED THE PARTY'S WEEKEND NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING AND, ACCORDING TO PARTY SOURCES, ATTACKED INTERIM PRESIDENT SOUSA FRANCO FOR HIS INTERVIEW IN "OPCAO" WHICH HIGHLIGHTED THE DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN THE OFTEN DIVERGENT BASES OF PSD ELECTORAL SUPPORT (REF A). THE VERY SORT OF ADMISSION, ACCORDING TO SA CARNEIRO, THE SOCIALISTS HAVE SOUGHT TO EXPLOIT. PSD DEPUTY ANTONIO REBELO DE SOUSA TOLD EMBOFF JAN 15 THAT SA CARNEIRO AND SOUSA FRANCO HAD AGREED THAT IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING IN FARO JAN 7-8 NEITHER WOULD MAKE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENTS THAT COULD BE USED--PRINCIPALLY BY THE SOCIALISTS--TO COMPLICATE THE COUNCIL MEETINGS OR THE JAN 28-29 NATIONAL CONGRESS. AS A RESULT, THE COUNCIL'S PERMANENT COMMITTEE DELETED A SA CARNEIRO EDITORIAL SUBMITTED TO THE PARTY NEWSPAPER "POVO LIVRE" WHICH ALLEGEDLY CONTAINED A VIOLENT PERSONAL ATTACK ON PRESIDENT EANES. THE COMMITTEE DID, HOWEVER, AUTHORIZE THE SOUSA FRANCO INTERVIEW--MUCH TO SA CARNEIRO'S CHAGRIN.

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4. POSITIVE PSD NEGOTIATING ROLE UNLIKELY: VITOR ANTONIO
AND REBELO DE SOUSA ADMIT THAT THE PARTY'S
EMPHASIS ON A NEW WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE IS WINDOW
DRESSING. NEITHER EXPECTS MUCH PROGRESS BY THE PRESIDENT'S
JAN 18 DEADLINE. WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT, BOT AGREE, IS SA CARNEIRO'S
PUBLICIZED INVOLVEMENT IN WHATEVER PSD DISCUSSIONS DO TAKE
PLACE WITH THE SOCIALISTS, THE CDS, AND EANES. SOUSA
FRANCO WILL CONTINUE TO HEAD THE PARTY'S NEGOTIATING TEAM,
BUT WITH SA CARNEIRO "DIRECTLY" INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS,
THE SOCIALISTS WILL FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT TO CAPITALIZE
ON THE SPLIT BETWEEN THE TWO.

5. PARTY CONGRESS LOOMS: SOCIALIST DIFFICULTIES WITH
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THE PCP AND THE CDS HAVE GIVEN THE PSD SOME
MANEUVERING ROOM. THE INTERNAL PARTY SPLIT, HOWEVER,

REMAINS AND WILL PROBABLY COME TO A HEAD AT THE CONGRESS IN LATE JANUARY. SA CARNEIRO'S PROPOSED PARTY STATUTE CHANGES WILL HAVE TO BE THRASHED OUT IN SEMI-PUBLIC. THE CURRENT INTERPARTY NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE A THING OF THE PAST, AND THE PSD IS MORE LIKELY TO FIND ITSELF IN THE OPPOSITION THAN IN THE GOVERNMENT. IF IN THE OPPOSITION, MANY PARTY INSIDERS GIVE THE STRATEGIC EDGE TO SA CARNEIRO. SOUSA FRANCO, THEY ARGUE, LACKS SA CARNEIRO'S CHARISMATIC, AND AT LEAST FOR SOME, INSPIRING SENSE OF THE DRAMATIC. SOUSA FRANCO IS A SKILLED TECHNICIAN WHEREAS SA CARNEIRO IS THE PRIMEVAL POLITICAL ANIMAL--A CHARACTERISTIC MORE SUITED TO THE LEADER OF AN OPPOSITION PARTY THAN TO A COALITION PARTNER.

6. SA CARNEIRO STILL HAS THE EDGE: RENEWED PSD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PS AND CDS ARE NOT LIKELY TO GET THE PSD BACK IN THE MAINSTREAM OF NEGOTIATIONS. TIME IS SHORT AND THE PARTY'S NEGOTIATING POSITION REMAINS UNCHANGED. THE JAN 14-15 NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING WAS, AT LEAST ON THE SURFACE, SQUARELY BEHIND SOUSA FRANCO. BUT IF A TACTICAL VICTORY, IT WAS IN PART BECAUSE SA CARNEIRO SENSED A NEW FLUIDITY IN THE OVERALL POLITICAL ITUATION AND CHOSE NOT TO PUSH HIS CASE FOR PARTY CONTROL TO THE LIMIT. HE MAY BE HOLDING THAT OPTION FOR THE NATIONAL CONGRESS. HIS SPLIT WITH SOUSA FRANCO REMAINS. THE INTERIM PRESIDENT MAY WIN SOME SIGNIFICANT SKIRMISHES, BUT SA CARNEIRO, IF HE DECIDES TO FORCE THE ISSUE, IS STILL FAVORED TO WIN THE BATTLE.
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